



THE WALKING DEAD

27

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Cliff Liles
+ CLIFF

KIRKMAN • ADLARD • RATHBURN

IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

THE WALKING DEAD™

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Letterer

Previously:

The helicopter spotted flying over the prison started to crash. Rick, Glenn and Michonne piled into a car from the prison parking lot to find the crash site and search for survivors. When they arrived any survivors there might have been were gone. Someone had gotten there first...

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YOU MEAN LIKE
ANOTHER **CAMP**--
CLOSER TO THIS
AREA THAN WE
ARE?

WOULDN'T
WE HAVE **SEEN**
THEM BEFORE
NOW?

HOW MANY OF THEM
DO YOU THINK THERE
WERE? I SEE AT
LEAST **THREE**--NO
FOUR DIFFERENT
KINDS OF
SHOES.



WITH THE MUD
LIKE IT IS, THOUGH--I
CAN'T REALLY TELL,
THERE COULD HAVE BEEN
A DOZEN OF THEM.
THERE'D HAVE TO BE A
FEW IF THEY CARRIED
INJURED PEOPLE
OUT OF THIS
HELICOPTER.

RICK?
MICHONNE?
WHAT DO YOU
GUYS THINK?



GUYS?



GUYS?!



GUYS--
WAIT UP!

WOW--YOU'RE
SPEECHLESS.

IT'S A *SIMPLE*
OFFER, LORI. I THINK
I WANT TO *BE* WITH YOU--
YOU AND RICK. I MEAN,
IT'D BE *LIKE* WE WERE
MARRIED, BUT THERE
WOULDN'T BE A
CEREMONY OR
ANYTHING.

THAT'D
BE TOO
WEIRD.



CAROL--I
JUST DO NOT
KNOW WHAT
TO SAY.

YOU COULD
SAY *YES*--OR
THAT YOU'LL
THINK ABOUT
IT AT THE VERY
LEAST.

YOU *CARE*
ABOUT ME, DON'T
YOU? I MEAN--I
COULDN'T HAVE
READ YOU *THIS*
WRONG, COULD
I?



CAROL, WE'RE
FRIENDS AND WE'VE
BEEN THROUGH A LOT
TOGETHER, THAT MUCH
IS TRUE. THERE HASN'T
BEEN A DAY IN THE LAST
SEVEN MONTHS THAT WE
HAVEN'T AT LEAST *SEEN*
EACH OTHER... SO WE'VE
GOTTEN CLOSE.

BUT I THINK
I'M STARTING TO
REALIZE, WITH ALL THAT'S
GOING ON--SURVIVING,
LOOKING OVER OUR
SHOULDERS ALL THE TIME,
BEING ON THE RUN... IT'S
BECOMING CLEAR TO ME
THAT WE JUST DON'T
KNOW EACH OTHER
VERY WELL.

WE
HAVEN'T
HAD *TIME* TO
GET TO KNOW
EACH OTHER...
NOT REALLY.

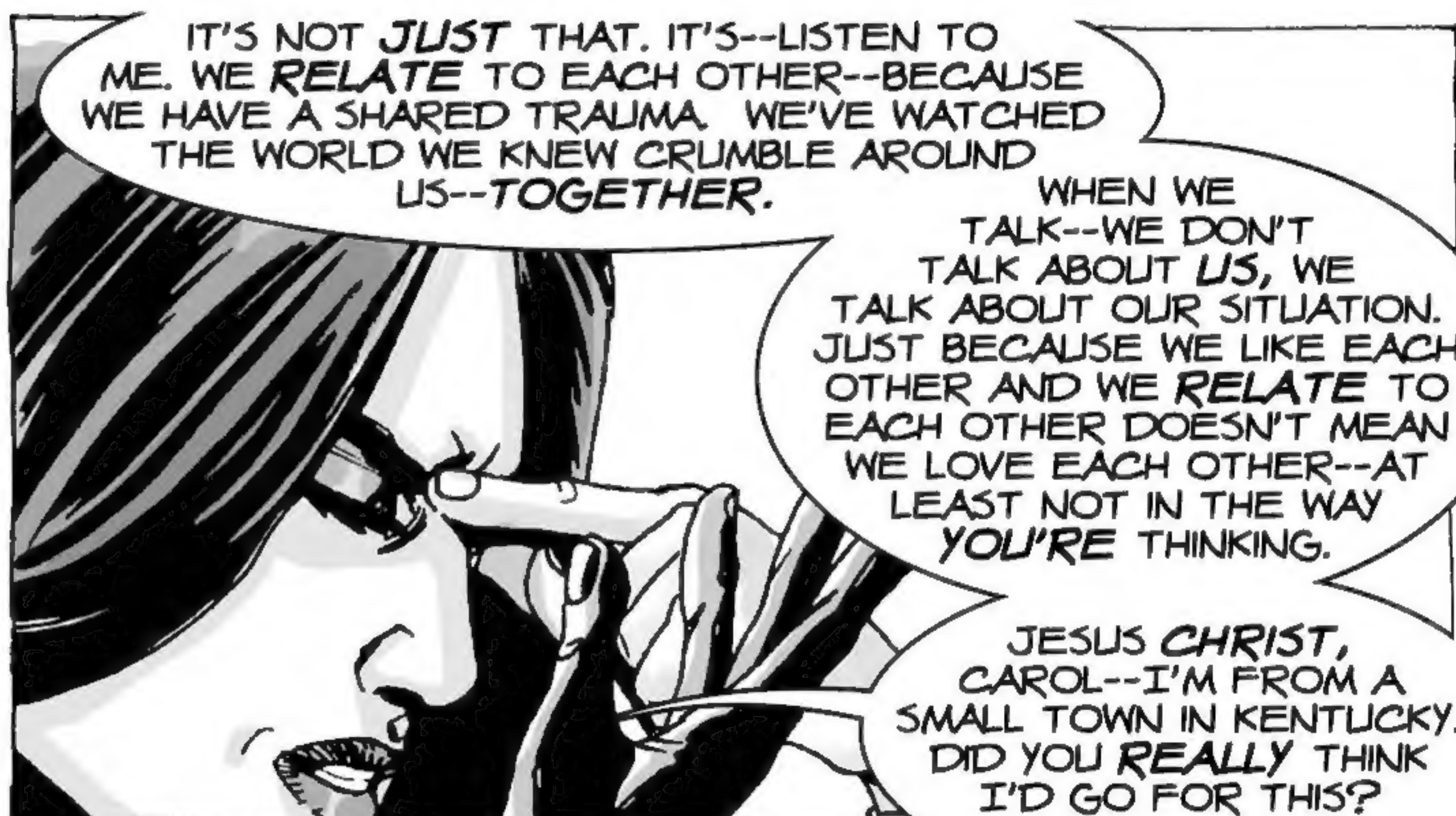


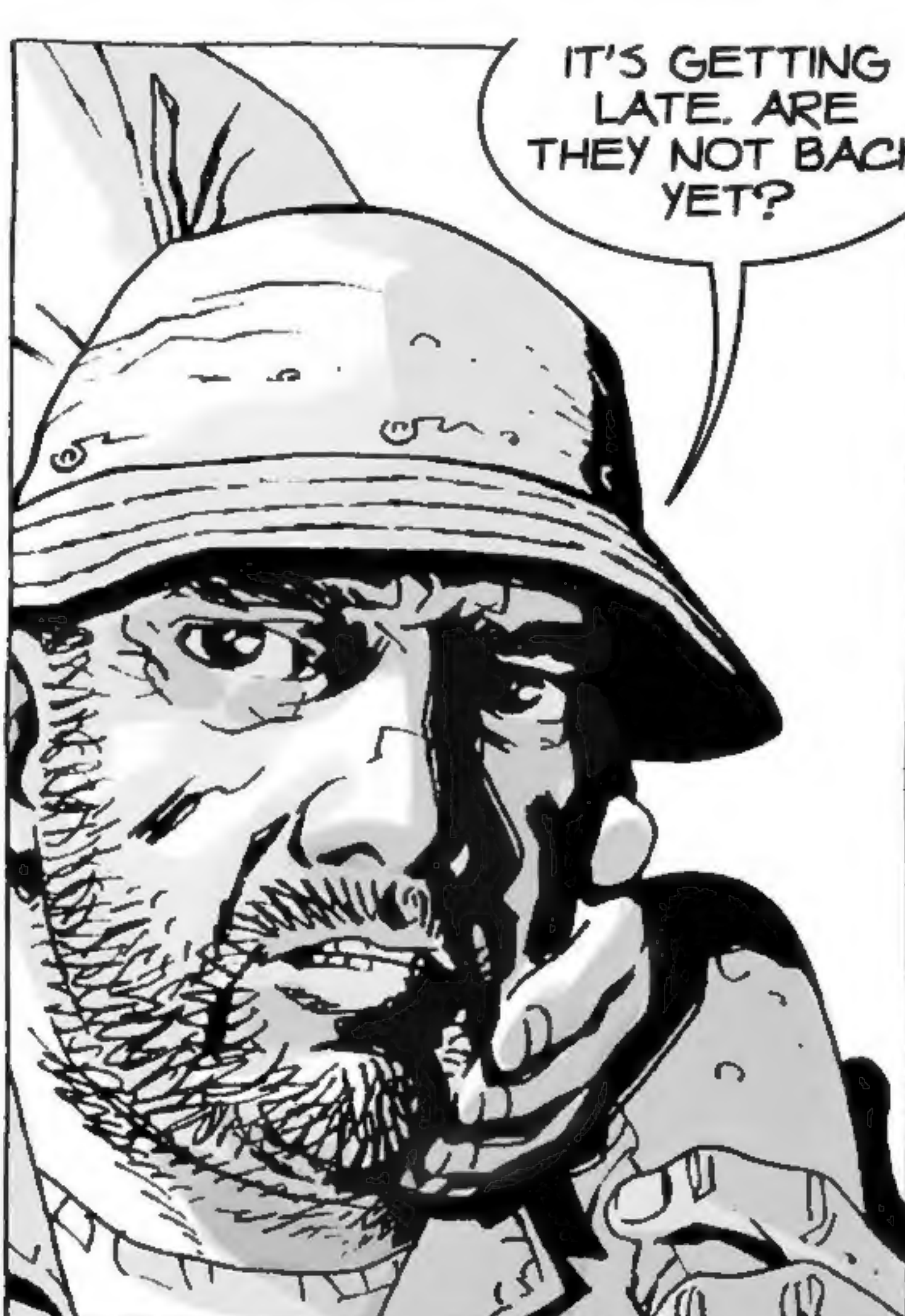
WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

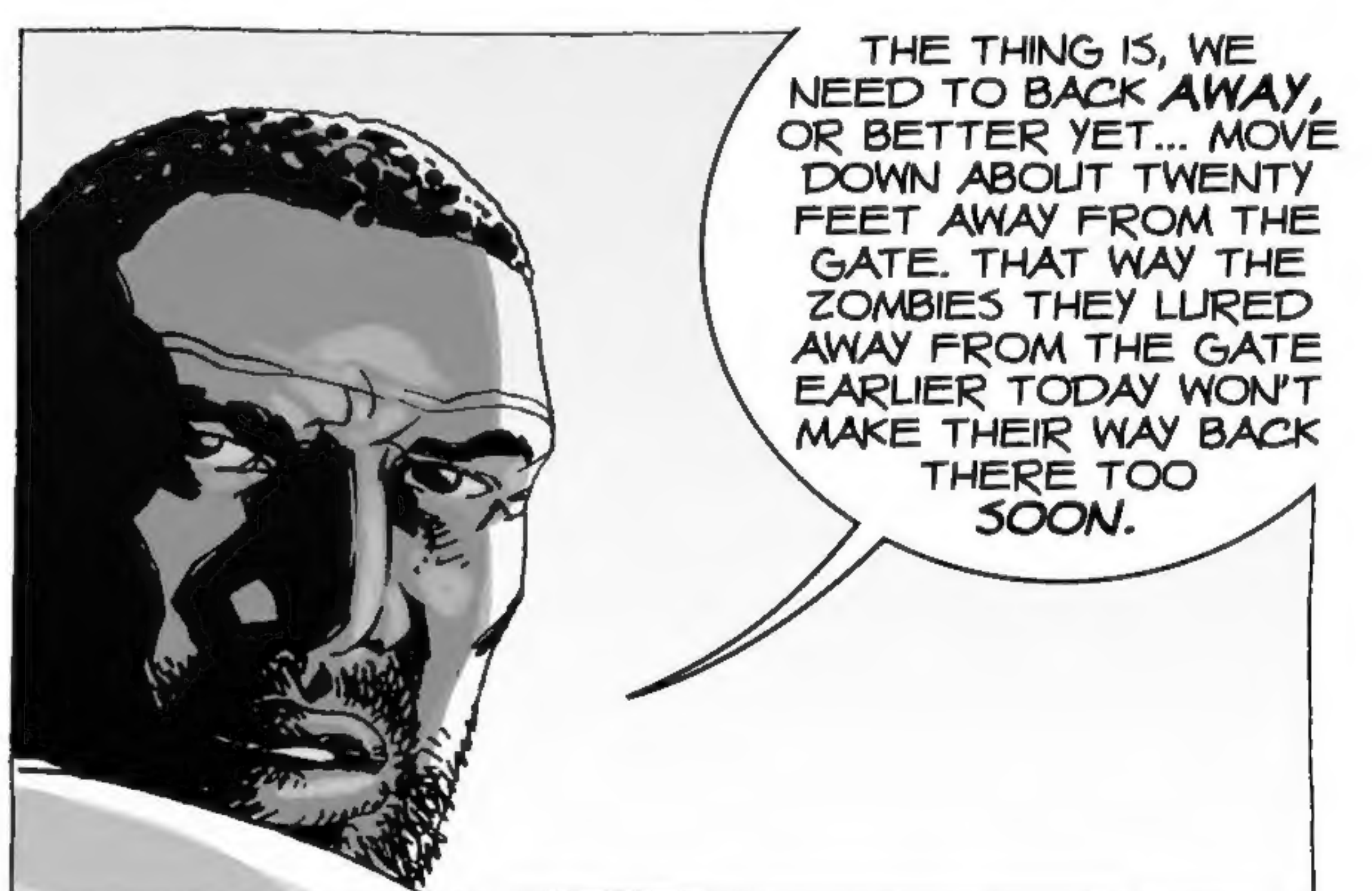


I DON'T KNOW.
DO YOU KNOW HOW
MANY SIBLINGS I HAD?
OR--OR WHERE I WENT
TO SCHOOL? DO YOU--
I DON'T KNOW--DO
YOU KNOW WHO MY
PARENTS WERE OR
WHERE I GREW
UP?

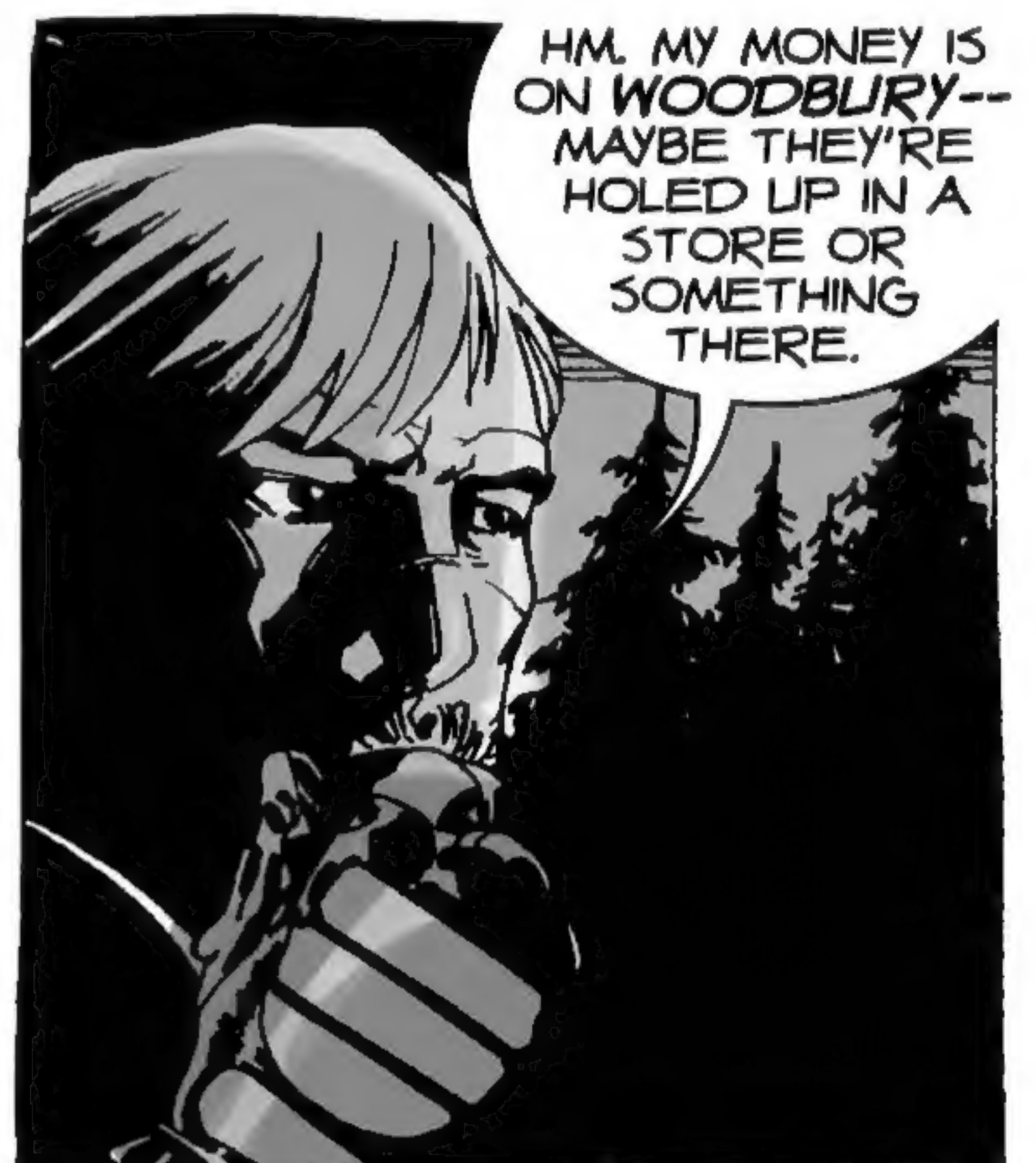
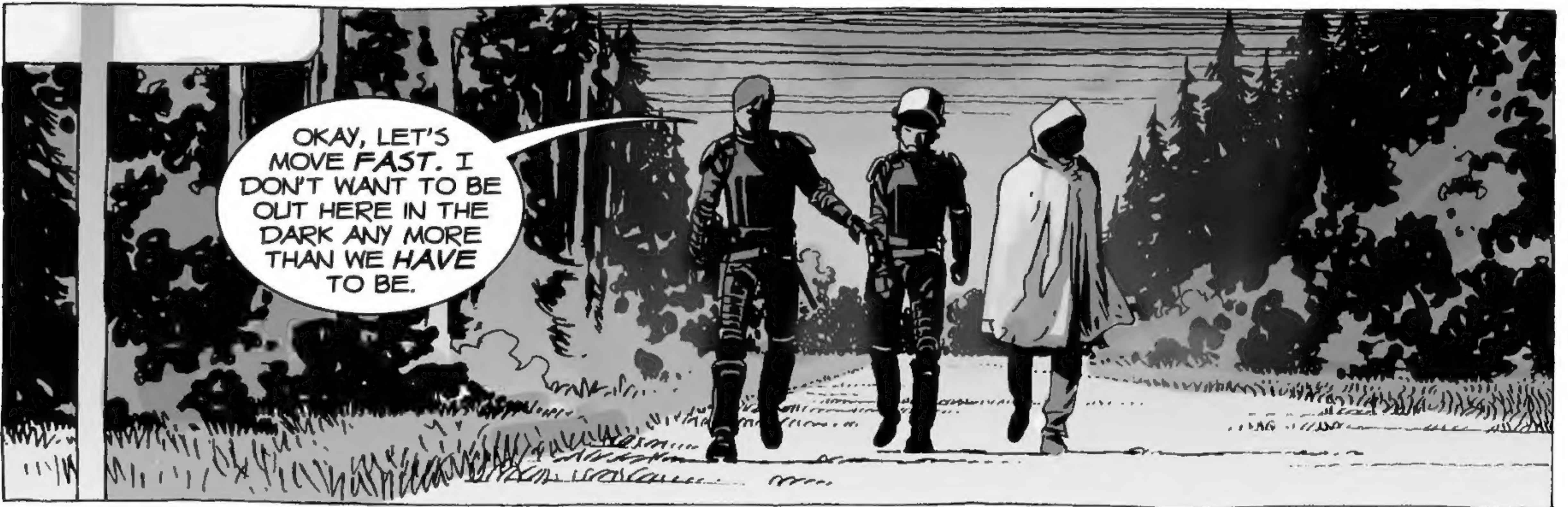
I DON'T
EVEN KNOW
WHAT YOUR
FAVORITE
FOOD IS.











WHEN YOUR FATHER GETS BACK, WE'RE GOING TO START MOVING OUT INTO THE CELLS AROUND US. YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE YOUR OWN ROOM. THAT'LL BE COOL, RIGHT?

YEAH.

GOODNIGHT, SON.

MOM--YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO WORRIED ABOUT DAD. YOU KNOW THAT--RIGHT?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, CARL?

EVERY TIME DAD LEAVES YOU GET **REALLY** UPSET AND WORRIED BUT **EVERY** TIME HE GOES SOMEWHERE HE ALWAYS COMES BACK FINE.

IF HE ALWAYS COMES BACK WITHOUT GETTING HURT THERE'S NO REASON TO WORRY.

I KNOW, SON. I'M NOT WORRIED.

SO--WE STAY
OUT HERE ALL
NIGHT?

IF WE HAVE TO. I
DON'T WANT THEM TO
BE TRAPPED OUT
THERE IF THEY DO
COME BACK TONIGHT.
YOU UP FOR IT? YOU
GOING TO BE ABLE TO
STAY AWAKE?

YOU THINK I'VE BEEN
AROUND THESE FUCKERS
LONG ENOUGH TO GET
COMFORTABLE ENOUGH
TO GO TO *SLEEP* TEN
FEET AWAY FROM
THEM?

NOT
FUCKING
LIKELY. YOU
FOLLOW
ME?

I DO. I
DO. YOU WON'T
SEE *ME* NODDING
OFF. THE SMELL
ALONE WILL KEEP
ME UP.

PLUS, I'D
LIKE TO BE
AWAKE AND HAVE
THE GATE OPEN
FOR THEM IF THEY
COME TEARING
DOWN THAT ROAD
AT US.

YOU WORRIED
ABOUT THEM?
MICHONNE? THE
OTHERS?

DO I WISH THEY
WERE BACK? YEAH.
ABSOLUTELY. AM I
WORRIED? NO.
NOT EVEN A
LITTLE BIT.

RICK AND
GLENN CAN HOLD
THEIR OWN. *RICK*
ESPECIALLY--AND HE'S
NOT ABOUT TO LET
GLENN GET HURT.
WE'VE BUTTED HEADS,
BUT I STILL RESPECT
THE MAN.

MICHONNE IS
FINE. SHE WAS OUT
THERE ALONE FOR
SO LONG... I DON'T
THINK SHE'LL HAVE
ANY TROUBLE
SPENDING A NIGHT
OUT THERE.

MY ONLY REAL
CONCERN IS WHAT'S
HOLDING THEM UP--
WHAT WAS AT THAT
HELICOPTER THAT'S
KEEPING
THEM?

FUCK IF I KNOW.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE MOVING TO A-BLOCK TOO, AREN'T YOU?

YEAH, YOU?

DON'T KNOW YET. THINKING ABOUT IT. TO BE HONEST, I'M JUST ENJOYING HAVING THE OPTION.

I WAS A PRISONER HERE.. IT'S WEIRD HOW DIFFERENT THIS PLACE CAN BECOME JUST BY SLEEPING WITH THE CELL DOOR OPEN.

IT'S A NEW WORLD, MAN. IMAGINE HOW WEIRD IT MUST BE TO US TO LIVE IN A PRISON... AND COME TO CALL IT HOME.

WE'RE SLEEPING IN ROOMS WITH BARS ON ONE WALL. ALL WE SEE ALL DAY IS FENCES AND BARS AND WE'RE HAPPIER THAN WE'VE BEEN SINCE THIS WHOLE SHIT STARTED.

I WAS NEVER OUT THERE. I WAS NEVER IN DANGER, HUNTED, TERRORIZED BY THOSE THINGS. I WAS IN HERE BEFORE THEY CAME TO LIFE AND STARTED KILLING PEOPLE... AND I WAS IN HERE AFTER.

SO YEAH--IT'S A NEW WORLD, BUT GOD HELP ME...

I LIKE THIS WORLD BETTER.



WE SEEM TO BE
OKAY SO FAR--
MAYBE THERE JUST
AREN'T ANY
ROAMERS IN THIS
AREA.

THAT'D
BE OUR
FIRST BIT
OF LUCK
TODAY.

THEY'RE
THERE.



THAT'S JUST HOW IT
WORKS OUT IN THE OPEN.
WE'RE PASSING THEM,
WALKING RIGHT BY THEM
WITHOUT NOTICING--BUT
THEY'RE NOTICING--
AND FOLLOWING.

THEY CAN'T
WALK AS FAST
AS US, SO THE
LONGER WE WALK,
THE FURTHER AWAY
THEY'LL BE... BUT
THEY'RE STILL
AFTER US.

WHEN WE
GET TO WHEREVER
IT IS WE'RE GOING,
WHEN WE STOP IT'S
JUST A MATTER OF
TIME BEFORE THEY
CATCH UP TO US. AND
THE LONGER OUR
TRIP... THE MORE
THERE WILL
BE.





HEY.



DALE?
ARE YOU
AWAKE?

ANDREA, HONEY. THREE OF
THE ONLY PEOPLE I KNOW
TO BE ALIVE IN THIS WORLD
ARE OUT THERE IN THE
WILD TONIGHT.

THEY'RE
OUTSIDE IN THE
DARK WITH ALL THOSE
THINGS WE'VE GOT
LINED UP ON THE
OTHER SIDE OF
OUR FENCE.

IF THEY'RE
NOT DEAD ALREADY
THEY PROBABLY WILL
BE SOON AND THERE
AIN'T A DAMN THING
I CAN DO ABOUT
IT.

SO YEAH--
I'M AWAKE,
DARLING... AND
I'M LIKELY TO
REMAIN SO UNTIL
THAT SUN
CREEPS UP.



SO
YOU'RE
WORRIED
ABOUT
THEM?

YOU BETTER BE
THANKFUL YOU'RE
SO GODDAMN
CUTE.

I'M
VERY
WORRIED
ABOUT
THEM.



ME TOO.
I DOUBT I'LL
BE GETTING A
LOT OF SLEEP
TONIGHT
EITHER.



WELL, THAT'S NO GOOD. WE'RE PARENTS, NOW. WE GOTTA BE BRIGHT-EYED AND BUSHY-TAILED TOMORROW FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

ONE OF US IS GOING TO NEED TO GET SOME SLEEP.



SHIT. THE TWINS. I ALMOST FORGOT.

CHRIST.



THAT'S RIGHT. WE'RE PARENTS NOW. WE HAVE TO BE RESPONSIBLE.



YOU THINK THEY'RE OKAY? SLEEPING BY THEMSELVES I MEAN?



THOSE BOYS ARE TOUGHER THAN WE THINK. KIDS, Y'KNOW, THEY CAN HANDLE A LOT MORE THAN WE GIVE THEM CREDIT FOR. MOST OF THEM ANYWAY.

THEY ASKED TO SLEEP IN THEIR OWN CELL AND SO WE LET THEM. THEY'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT. THEY DON'T NEED TO BE TOLD TO DO THINGS THEY DON'T WANT TO DO JUST YET. WE'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME FOR THAT SOON ENOUGH.

WE GOT THEM RIGHT NEXT DOOR-- GOT THE DOOR CLOSED TIGHT AND EVERYTHING. THEY'LL BE FINE UNTIL MORNING.

SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE DOING ENOUGH WORRYING FOR THE BOTH OF US. SO, IT LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING TO HAVE TO PUT THIS BUSINESS OUT OF MY HEAD AND GET SOME SLEEP.

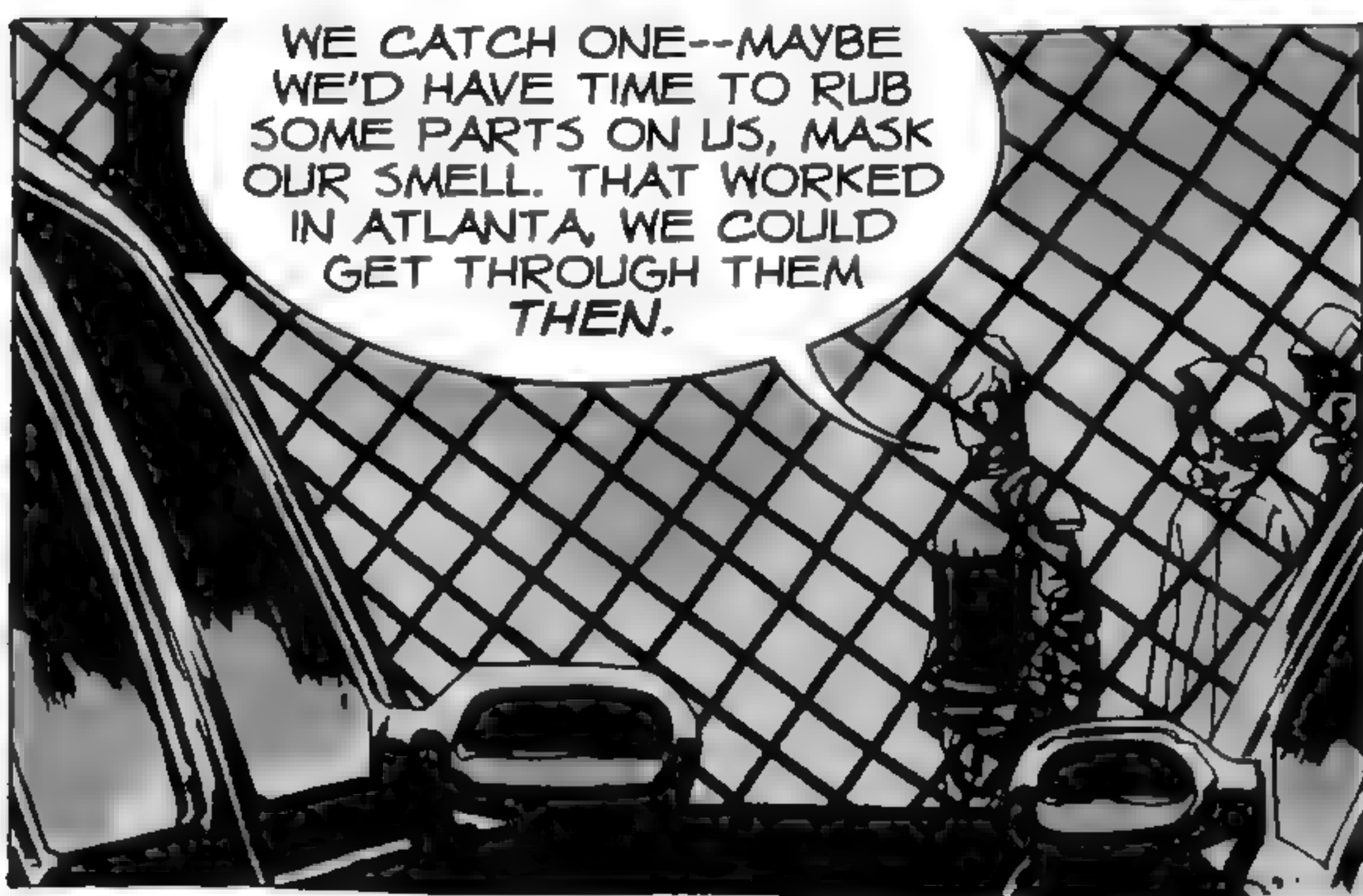
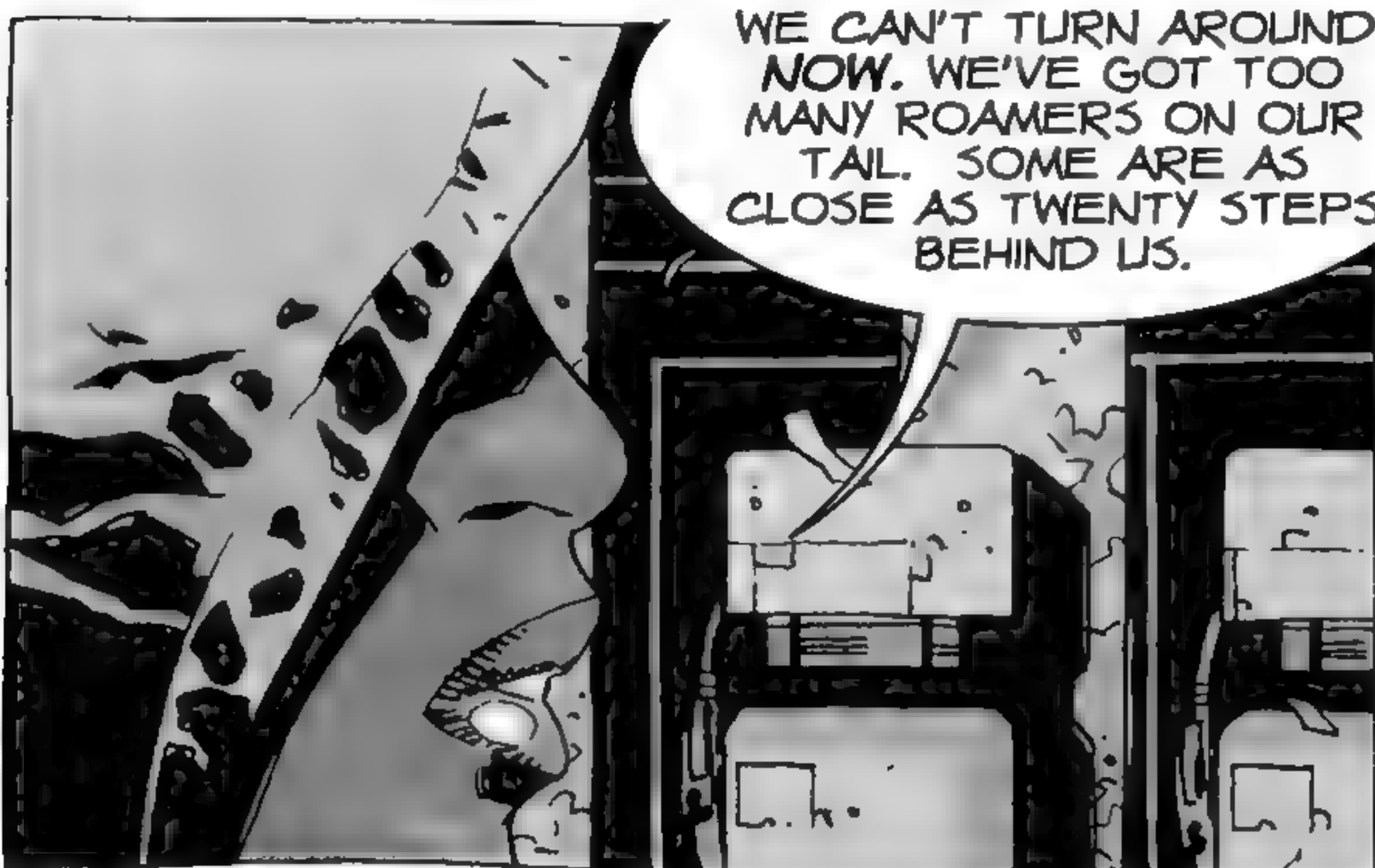
SOMEHOW.

SOMEBODY'S GOING TO HAVE TO POUR THAT CEREAL TOMORROW MORNING.



I LOVE YOU, DALE. GOOD-NIGHT.

YOU TOO, KIDDO.







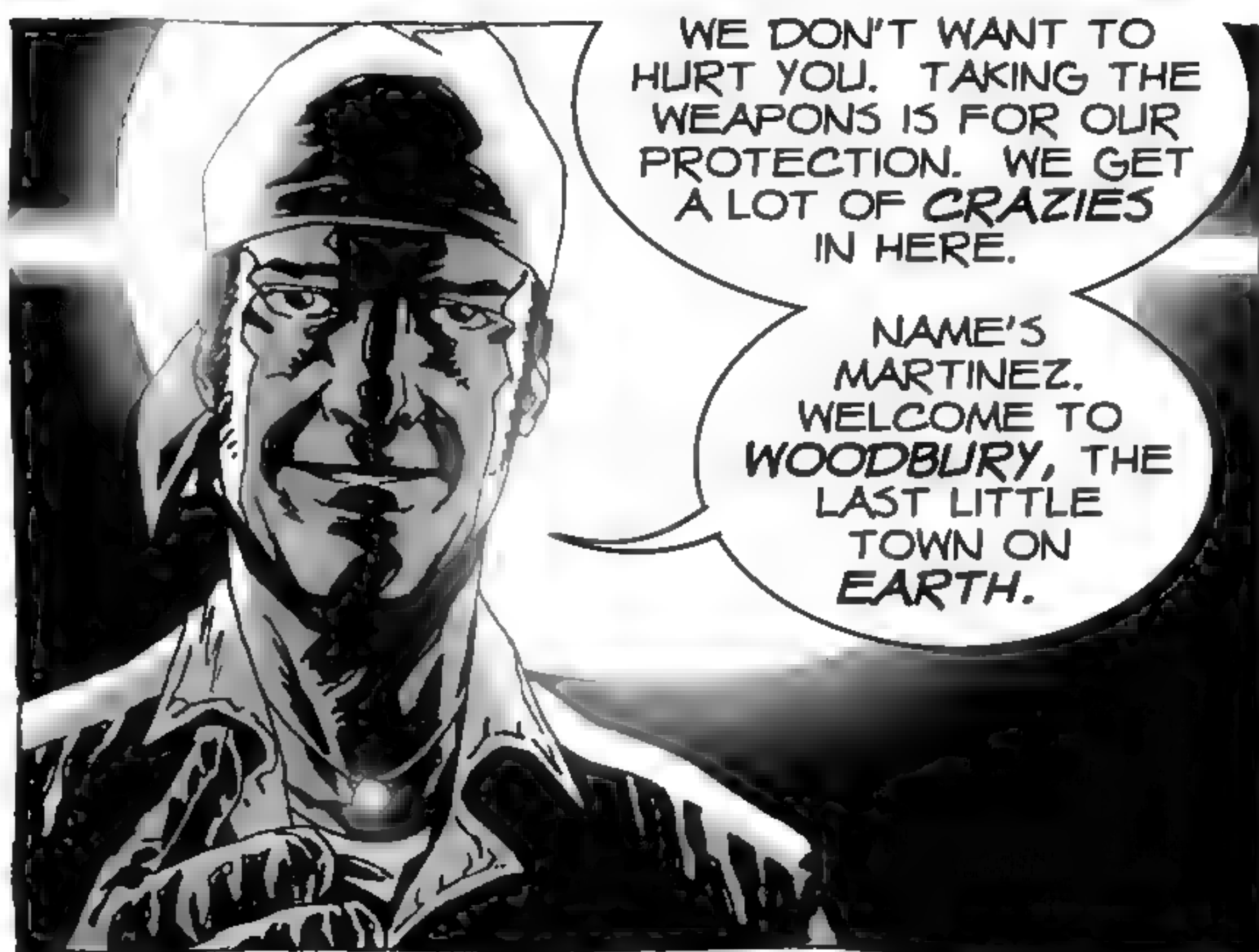
GET THEIR WEAPONS, WES-- GUNS, KNIVES, **ALL** OF THEM. MAKE SURE THEY'RE CLEAN BEFORE THEY TAKE ANOTHER STEP INSIDE.

RIGHT, BOSS.

LET 'EM, MICHONNE-- DOESN'T LOOK LIKE WE'VE GOT MUCH OF A CHOICE.

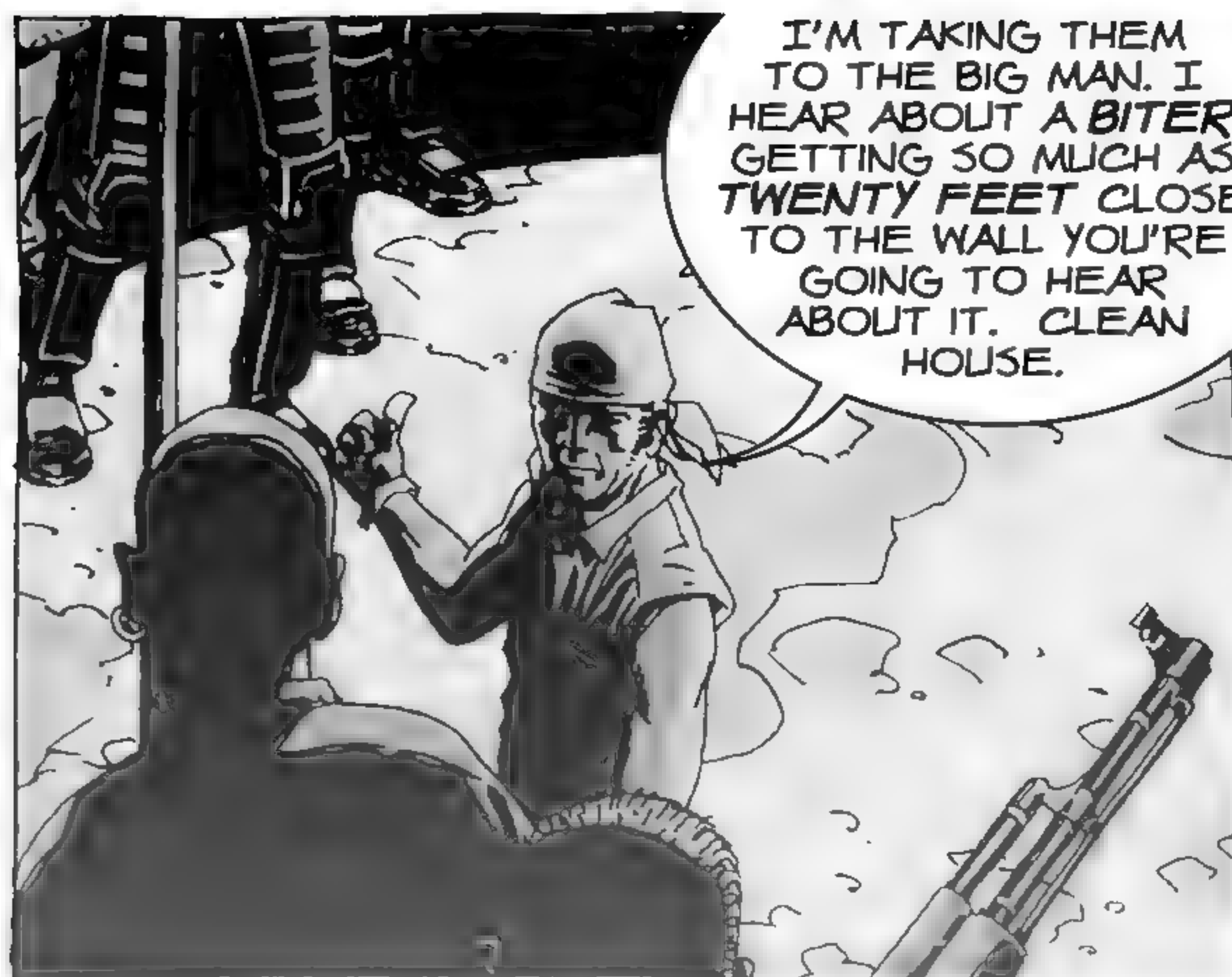


WHY ARE YOU TAKING OUR WEAPONS? WE JUST WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PEOPLE IN THE HELICOPTER. YOU **SAVED** THEM RIGHT?



WE DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU. TAKING THE WEAPONS IS FOR OUR PROTECTION. WE GET A LOT OF **CRAZIES** IN HERE.

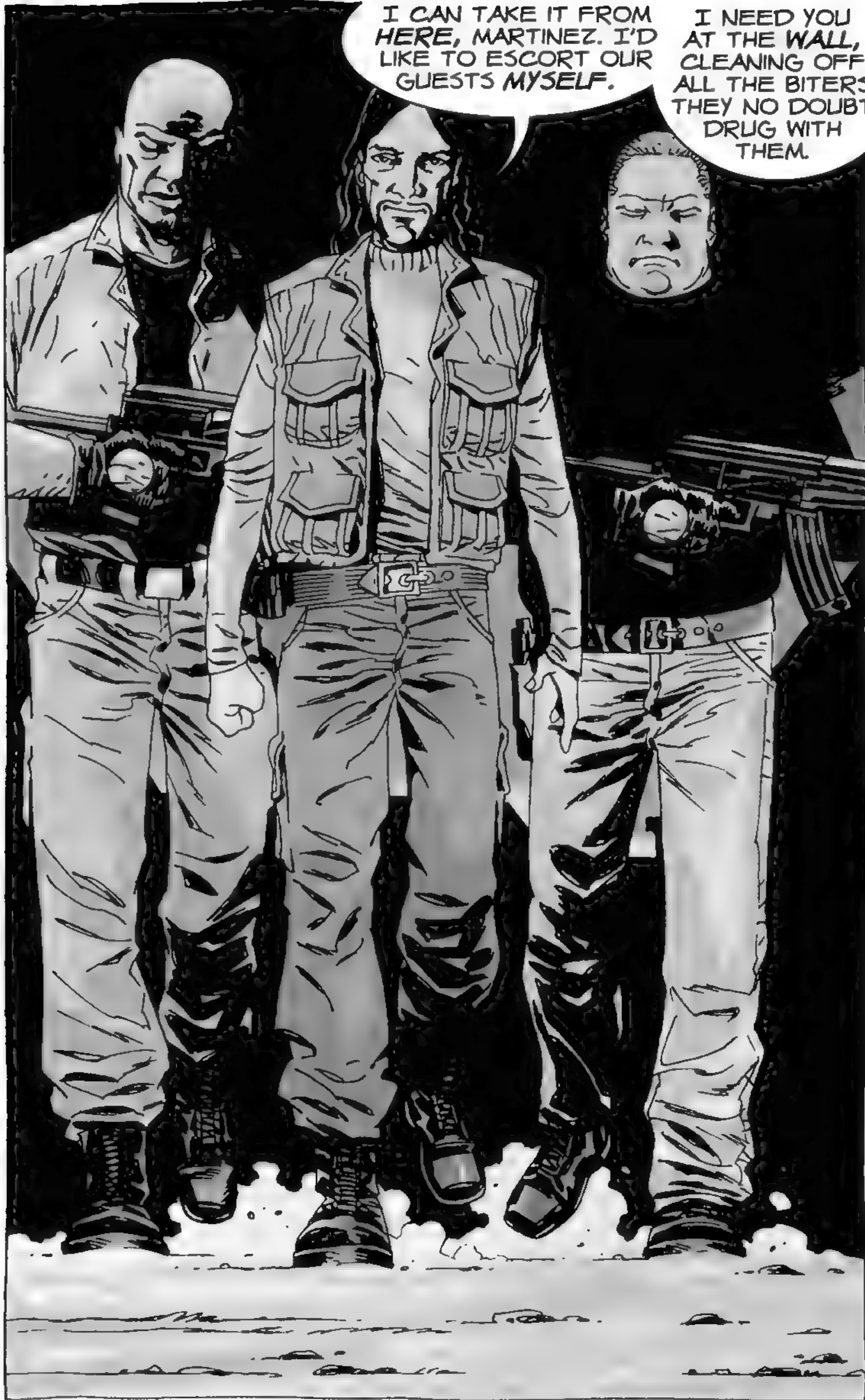
NAME'S MARTINEZ. WELCOME TO **WOODBURY**, THE LAST LITTLE TOWN ON **EARTH**.



I'M TAKING THEM TO THE BIG MAN. I HEAR ABOUT A **BITER** GETTING SO MUCH AS **TWENTY FEET** CLOSE TO THE WALL YOU'RE GOING TO HEAR ABOUT IT. CLEAN HOUSE.



YOU GUYS CAN FOLLOW ME.



I CAN TAKE IT FROM HERE, MARTINEZ. I'D LIKE TO ESCORT OUR GUESTS MYSELF.

I NEED YOU AT THE WALL, CLEANING OFF ALL THE BITERS THEY NO DOUBT DRUG WITH THEM.

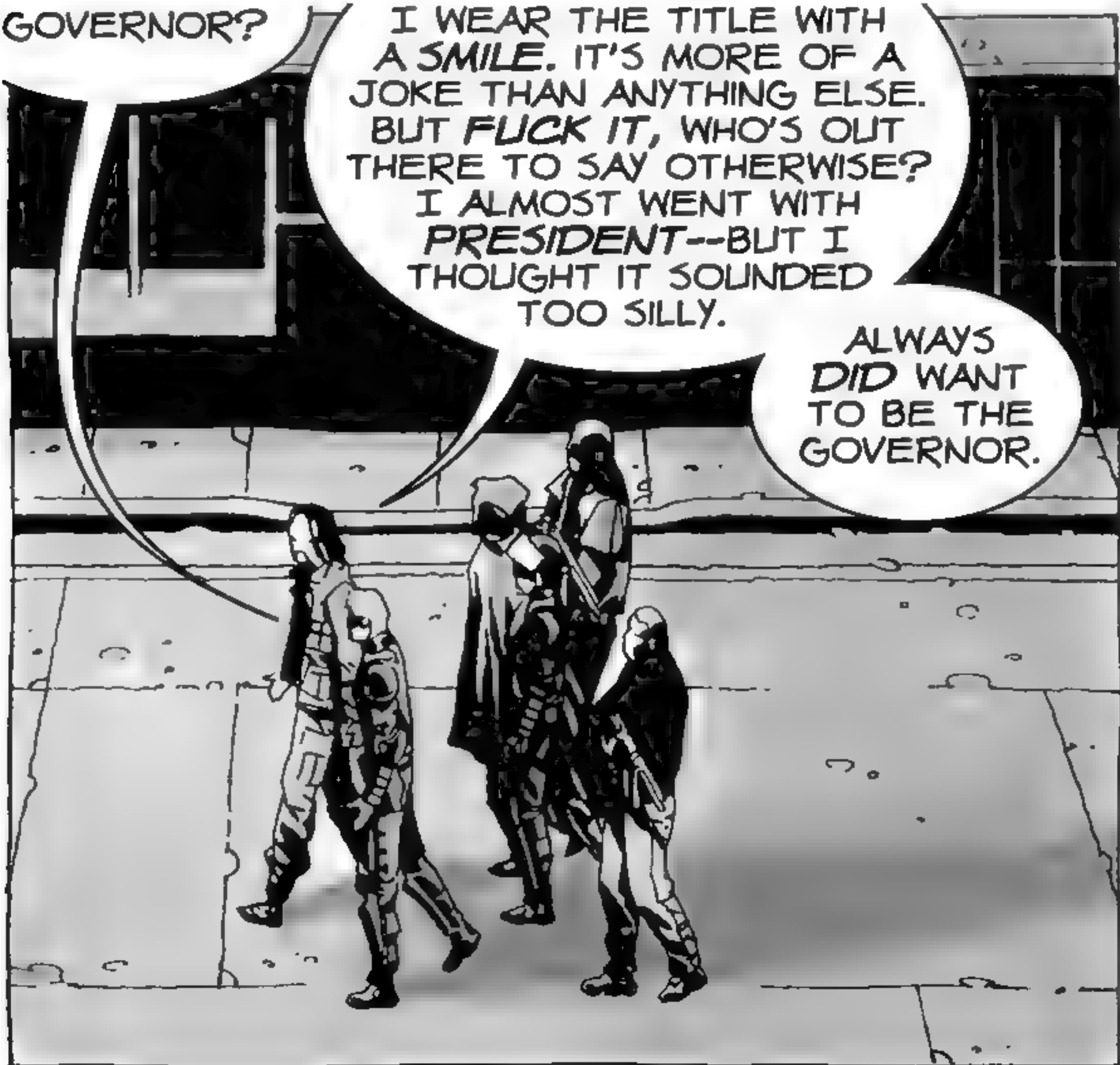


YES, SIR, GOVERNOR. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU'D BE COMING OUT TO GET THEM WHEN WE GAVE WORD OF THEIR ARRIVAL.

THEY'RE ALL YOURS.



FOLLOW ME, FOLKS. I'LL GIVE YOU THE NICKEL TOUR.



GOVERNOR?

I WEAR THE TITLE WITH A SMILE. IT'S MORE OF A JOKE THAN ANYTHING ELSE. BUT **FUCK IT**, WHO'S OUT THERE TO SAY OTHERWISE? I ALMOST WENT WITH **PRESIDENT**--BUT I THOUGHT IT SOUNDED TOO SILLY.

ALWAYS DID WANT TO BE THE GOVERNOR.



SAW MY CHANCE AND I TOOK IT.

SINCE YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S DOING THE TALKING FOR NOW--WHAT'S YOUR STORY, STRANGER?

NO STORY. WE'VE BEEN TRAVELING SINCE THE TURN. SAW THE HELICOPTER AND WAS CLOSE ENOUGH TO INVESTIGATE--JUST NOT CLOSER THAN YOU, RIGHT?



BELIEVE I WAS TALKING TO THE MAN, HERE, MA'AM. I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND.



THAT'S OUR STORY. SHIT HIT THE FAN. WE'VE BEEN WALKING EVER SINCE. WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU SEEM TO BE HOLDING THIS PLACE DOWN PRETTY GOOD.



WHAT DO YOU HAVE HERE? A COUPLE OF BLOCKS FENCED OFF? THAT'S NICE.

FOUR BLOCKS, ACTUALLY. WE'RE WORKING ON THE FENCES FOR THE FIFTH. WE GOT ABOUT FORTY PEOPLE HERE. SEEMED LIKE WE WERE GETTING MORE EVERY DAY AT FIRST--THEN LESS--THEN NOTHING. YOU'RE THE FIRST IN A MONTH. HARD WINTER, I GUESS.

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY WE LOST? THE GOVERNMENT I MEAN--THE WAR AGAINST THE BITERS. WE DID LOSE, Y'KNOW.

PRESIDENT SENDS OUT THE NATIONAL GUARD TO SECURE THE CITIES, MAKE 'EM SAFE ZONES FOR ALL US NORMAL FOLK TO FLOCK TO. I'M SURE YOU REMEMBER THAT PART OF THE STORY.

MAIN PROBLEM THERE IS THE AVERAGE WEEKEND WARRIOR WAS WORRIED MORE ABOUT HIS WIFE AND KID THAN HE WAS ABOUT DRIVING HIS ASS TO ATLANTA TO FIGHT OFF CORPSES.

WHOLE GUARD STATION ABOUT A MILE AWAY--COMPLETELY ABANDONED. ALL KINDA SUPPLIES LEFT INSIDE. WE BEEN MAKING GOOD USE OF IT. NIGHT VISION GOGGLES, SNIPER RIFLES, AMMO, YOU SEEN IT IN ACTION. THIS PLACE WOULDN'T BE SHIT WITHOUT IT.



YOU SOUND LUCKY. WHERE IS IT YOU'RE TAKING US? WE'RE WALKING TOWARD THE LIGHT. WHAT IS THAT? BASEBALL GAME?



WELL, STRANGER. IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES LUCKY AROUND HERE. YOU SHOWED UP ON THE PERFECT NIGHT.

THERE'S A FIGHT TONIGHT.





CURIOUS ABOUT ALL THE ELECTRICITY?

FUCKING REDNECKS. THEY LOVED THEIR DIRT TRACK RACING SO DAMN MUCH THEY HAD A BIG ASS GENERATOR INSTALLED. THAT WAY THEIR NIGHT RACES WOULDN'T BE INTERRUPTED BY A POWER FAILURE.

FIGHTS ARE MOSTLY DURING THE DAY. WE ONLY SAVE THE GENERATOR FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS.

C'MON-- I'VE GOT A PRIVATE ROOM AT THE TOP. BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE.

SO WHAT? YOU MAKE THE ZOMBIES FIGHT EACH OTHER?

I'M SENSING A BIT OF DISAPPROVAL, STRANGER. IN CASE YOU AIN'T NOTICED, THE CABLE'S OUT. AIN'T A WHOLE LOT IN THE WAY OF ENTERTAINMENT TO BE HAD.

PEOPLE GET RESTLESS WITHOUT ENTERTAINMENT.

ZOMBIES? NO, A BITER FIGHT AIN'T NO KIND OF ENTERTAINMENT. WE GOT REAL LIVE PEOPLE GOING INTO THE CIRCLE. TWO ENTER--THEY BEAT THE HELL OUT OF EACH OTHER-- PUT ON A GOOD SHOW. BITERS ARE JUST EXTRA MOTIVATION.

PRIVATE

YOU FENCE OFF THIS AREA--MAKE IT SAFE AND THEN CART IN A PILE OF ROAMERS FOR ENTERTAINMENT. NOT VERY SAFE, GOVERNOR.

YOU SERIOUS?

AT FIRST, YEAH-- WE HAD A FEW... ACCIDENTS. ONCE WE STARTED FEEDING THEM, THOUGH... THEY GOT PRETTY DOCILE. NOT MUCH OF A THREAT NOW.

BRUCE, CLOSE THAT DOOR, PLEASE.

WAIT-- YOU'RE FEEDING THEM? WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU FEEDING THEM?



WELL,
STRANGER.

WE'RE
FEEDING THEM
STRANGERS.

LETTER HACKS

WRITE TO US AT:

THE WALKING DEAD
C/O FUNK-O-TRON
P.O. BOX 54386
LEXINGTON, KY 40555-4386

OR

WALKINGDEAD@FUNKOTRON.COM

Christ.

In the proofreading stage it was brought to my attention that I'm possibly going to catch hell over this Zombie Arena Fighting since there was that cage fight in Land of the Dead. Once again, I've got to play the "I had this planned before hand" card--which I'll admit is totally lame. All I can really say is that this will be more along the lines of Roman Gladiator Arena fights than Small Underground Bar Cage Fighting. And in the end... it will be as vastly different from that brief scene in Land of the Dead as this entire book has been from 28 Days Later.

We've got big stuff coming up--so stay tuned.

Also, I just wanted to give you guys a heads up. Sculptor Extraordinaire CLAYBURN MOORE has signed on to do a WALKING DEAD STATUE. That's right kids, we've got one on the horizon. I'm totally excited. I'll keep you guys posted and you'll see pictures here as soon as we've got them to show.

Let's get this show on the road and answer some letters!

Mr. Kirkman,
Hi, you possibly may remember me.
I had the pleasure of meeting you at a Boston Comic Con.(there was an S&M Con next door...Woo Hoo!) My best bud (and alternate reality life-partner) Jon Hernandez took a picture of you and me together. (you were rubbing my freshly buzzed head). The picture is framed and proudly displayed in my living room. Jon was the guy with the totally out of control beard and I bought a Metal Men comic for you because of a story you related about your youth. Anyway, enough memory triggers.

Metal Man comic... I was lost before but now I've got it.

It's cliched, but in the 37 years (yeah...37) I've been reading/collecting comics, I've never written in before. I'm a zombie fanatic from WAY back. My buddies and I snuck into the original Dawn of the Dead back in '78 and my life was FOREVER changed. For a while I had "zombie plague" nightmares that would wake me in the middle of the night. I don't have them anymore but when I have time to kill and my mind wanders, I STILL think about what I would do if it happened.

What actually prompted me to write was I overheard my teenaged sons and their friends talking about

what they're going to do WHEN it happens. They were arguing about who would be the leader. My 19 year old seems to be the alpha male. They have a plan in place concerning where they will initially meet and where they will go! I got such a kick out of this because it's exactly how I thought at their age. (aaaahhh sweet imagination) This particular genre seems to affect fans so profoundly.

Anyway, onto The Walking Dead #24. The book continues to surprise and entertain. The "blow out" between Rick and Tyreese in issue #23 was unexpected but made sense. I've suspected all along that the title Walking Dead referred more to the survivors than the zombies. Wasn't Rick's right hand messed up pretty badly when he beat Thomas near to death? I've been expecting some sort of repercussions from that. Infections possibly prompting amputation? I guess the damage wasn't as extensive as it initially appeared.

It healed up cleanly because of the bandaging and what not. He's still got some damage too it--his grip is really weak. We'll be seeing more of this as time goes on. I'm not going to forget.

Oh, just saw the ad for the Deluxe HC. Looks AWESOME. Are the signed and numbered editions going to be available in limited quantities at various comic shops or will they need to be special ordered?

Fanatic for life..
Bob Dore

As you can see some of this mail is old. The hardcover has come out and the signed and numbered edition was limited to 150. Some people that special ordered it didn't even get a copy. Which is a shame. I really feel bad about that... but that's the nature of limited stuff. In other news, we've got a NEW Walking Dead hardcover on the way. This one will be a little more affordable, at \$34.95 and will contain issues 1-12. It'll be on sale in July. And NO I'm not abandoning the deluxe hardcover format, there will still be a volume two deluxe book around the time that issue 48 comes out. These smaller hardcovers will have less stuff for less money and won't be limited like the deluxe one. These smaller hardcovers will be more like the Invincible Ultimate Collection.

Dear Kirk-man,(that's your superhero name)
Just read the walking Dead #24, and i felt inspired to write. The walking dead #24 was a good read for a number of reasons.

1) It seems to me that the entire issue took place in the span of, like, ten minutes. I really liked the pacing. It makes it seem like something really big is about to happen. No zombie action, but there is an impending doom that seems to be hovering about. Those shots of the zombies at the fence are good fore-shadowing. I can almost hear that fence crashing down at any second...

2) Another damn good cover. Rick has lost it. The somber blue color scheme was a good comparison to the insanity in Rick's eyes. It summoned a conflicting feeling about Rick and his sanity; which is exactly what this issue was about. I still side with Rick, and see everything he has done thus far as being pretty rational for the circumstances he has been thrust into. Maybe other readers see him as having gone a little off the deep end, but so far I have agreed with his decisions.

3) Interesting that the governing comittee would have an even number of members. A 2 against 2 vote will surely come up at some point, so I am curious why you chose an even number for leadership.

I figured it'd be best if all important decisions required a unanimous vote. They won't be voting on every little thing--just the big stuff.

4) I generally think that double-page spreads are complete B.S., but this one was very powerful. A nice finale for the hardback's final pages. "We are the walking dead!" It makes perfect sense, and it's something that has never crossed my mind. The title isn't about the zombies anymore than the story is. The story is about the lives and survival of the main cast. They are the walking dead because of the inevitability of their situation. That was a very classic moment.

It's time for a few questions.

1) Do the first 24 issues all take place on Earth-1, or Earth-2? What Earth are we on? Will there be 6 mini series focusing on minute aspects of your plot that I can read while waiting on major plot points to be explored? "Infinite Dead"? "The Dead/Human war"? "The Walking Dead Project"? "The Dead United"? I really like to feel like I am being suckered into spending lots of money to get a full story, so I hope you are plannig some pretty big summer events.

How did you get a look at the upcoming schedule?! CRAP.

2) If it became a question of the series being able to continue and be profitable, would having more ads be an alternative to cancellation? I am a bit un-clear as to how the system works at image. The latest issue had zero non-walking dead ads (Thank you!!!!), so I am a little curious how that affects the profitability of the ook. I just counted the number of ads in the latest issue of Uncanny X-men (27 ad pages vs 24 story pages. It almost seems unbelievable), and I could not believe how many ads I had to suffer through in one comic. In your book there are zero ads breaking up the story. I think that's great, but I am curious about how that works.

This book survives on profits from the sale of the actual book alone. We don't sell ads. If we did I'd never put them in the middle of the story.

I've always liked how Image books never did that. Although, I gotta say... I don't even NOTICE them when I read books from Marvel and DC.

3) You're right. The "Savage Dragon" is the cat's pajamas. I wish that it would come out sometime. I'm sure that being the president is swell and all, but I miss the "Savage Dragon". Maybe you could threaten to punch him in the neck if he doesn't have a new issue out soon. I saw your rather intimidating picture in the Wizard top ten writers, and I am sure he would respond to any threats you might make. Speaking of which...

Thanks for the heads up. I threatened to punch Erik Larsen in the neck and he put issue 122 of Savage Dragon out in January. If I'm not mistaken, issue 123 will be out by the time this issue is out. I've even seen pages from 124. If I didn't know better--I'd say the old man was doing a monthly book.

4) Are you still expecting that pecan pie that I promised in the last letter? Judging from that pic in wizard I would say that you have had enough pie. OH, SNAP! You were just schooled. Don't hate.

Am I really that FAT? Fuck all you people.

5) I bought all those 2099 one-shots you did for Marvel. I dug all of them! Any plans for follow-ups?

I'm following up on them in the current LEAGUE OF LOSERS arc in Marvel Team-Up 15-18. Mutant 2099 makes and appearance and so does the Daredevil 2099 from that one-shot.

The Black Panther and the Inhumans ones were really cool, but the Daredevil one was my favorite.

Alright, that's all I got. Thanks for printing my last letter. I will be sending a care package of tacos and porn stars if this one sees print. (gotta up the ante)

Until next time,
Justin "slam-bizzle"manis

Jesus man--I don't want PORN STARS in my tacos. Asshole.

Dude...

"We ARE the walking dead!"

That was one fucking cool ending!

This could have been the last issue of the book and I would have gone away happy: the final realization of their situation. The fact that it wasn't the last issue, just makes me even happier. I cannot wait for #25, even if it is all normal-sized and un-bonus-filled!

The issues have been flying onto the shelves in the past couple of weeks, and you just haven't let up. I'd been watching and waiting for Tyreese and Rick to come to blows for ages now, ever since they came to the prison. With every issue the tension was visibly mounting between the pair. And yet when the smack down came, I was completely taken by surprise! And I loved how the last page of #22 continued into the first page of #23. Who gets credit for that idea: you or Charlie?

Try Erik Larsen. Don't you assholes read the letters columns?

And speaking of Charlie, that splash page at the end of #24? Shit, dude! I want THAT as a poster!

I won't go on any longer, if only because a lot of the letters seem to reiterate the same points, albeit unintentionally. I gotta tell you, I am seriously considering that 560 page hardcover, even if I do have all the issues already...

Keep up the good work guys.
Paul Shinn

The hardcover is totally sweet. You won't regret the purchase.

Dear Kirkman,

"WE ARE THE WALKING DEAD!" I remember a time when you said early on, later saying that it was pretentious. Still, it's good stuff. It seems like the point has been made, yet the book has finally gotten to the point at the same time. Oh, and I complained in the Invincible letter that you didn't print my letters. I was going to say something about the covers not being as great as they were, but the preview for issue 25 changed my mind. Besides, the psycho look on Rick's face on issue 24 is great. Did you not print those letters cause I gave a shout out? I knew that was lame, but did it anyways. I think I also mentioned David Hume. Man, college is killing me.

Man... I don't even know why I don't print some letters. Length, lack of a funny reply... who knows.

So some questions in wonderful numbered format:
1. Were you channeling Rhodes with Rick's rant?

Not really. I channeled Rhodes over in Marvel Zombies, though.

2. Have you ever thought about doing something with vampires? I personally don't care for them, with few exceptions, but it might be cool to see your take (but not in this book).

Shit... I guess I better get rid of the vampires in the next issue.

3. So what killed Allen? Infection from the amputation, zombie bite, loss of blood, or lack of will? Or was it my insistence? In that case, can you kill Andrea? She has it coming. Also, Allen is still listed as alive on the Characters page.

Yeah, I'm not running the characters pages again until I have time to update them. I'm not going to reveal what killed Allen. It could have been any one of those things.

4. Do you have a thing against guys named Allen. Saddest moment in Invincible history! Oh well, I voted to make him a Heroclix figure.

I've SEEN his Heroclix figure... it's GODDAMN GREAT. I don't know why I used Allen in both books without even realizing it. Oh, well.

5. Ever read Rick Spears' Dead West? Good stuff.

I bought a copy. Was really looking forward to reading it... and lost it to the piles. I don't know where the damn thing is now. I'll get around to it soon. I love the stuff Rick Spears and Rob G. do.

So hey, I can now alternate between the Spider-Man zombie cover of Marvel Zombies #1 and the Wolverine cover from #3 as my computer wallpaper. Man, the covers alone have sold the book to me. Give me that c

chance and I'll gush all over the letters pages of those books. Here's to two more years and more of Walking Dead and various other Kirkman zombie books. Can't wait to see the Ultimate X-Men fight Ultimate Voodoo Man and his zombie hoard? Do zombies hoard?

Chris Pitts

The only things they hoard are those cute little matchbox cars. They love those things.

Dear Robert "Don't Call Me Bob" Kirkman,

Please don't call me that. ;-)

Seems like you're getting a ton of letters from fans that proclaim The Walking Dead to be the best comic there is. Well, I'm here to set the record straight. TWD is not the best comic- Invincible is.

Have I printed this letter before?

I do love me some TWD though. After I discovered the greatness of Invincible, I bought the first three trades of TWD before I read a single page of it. That's a risky venture you know. What if I read the first trade and it stank? I'd be stuck with three stinky trades, and I'd be pissed about wasting my money. Fortunately it didn't stink, it rocked!

It took me a little longer to try Marvel Team-up. I wouldn't try it, because I think that the Scott Kolins covers are pug-fugly! (You'll probably interject to stick up for Scott, because you're cool like that, but sorry you're wrong. Please don't cuss at me.) **(You are retarded. Scott Kolins is a fantastic artist.)** I did finally read some MTU though, and it rocks too. I learned then to never doubt The Kirkman, and I've been buying up back issues of anything you wrote. Most of it is pretty great.

On a different note, I was one of those Mormon Missionaries, and I spent some time in Lexington. I wonder if I ever knocked on your door. Were you that guy who threatened to shoot me, if I didn't get off your property? I have an idea. If you want to make up for threatening to kill me you can have Charlie Adlard draw a Mormon Missionary zombie in an issue of TWD. Y'know, put a bike helmet on his head, have him wearing a short sleeved dress shirt, and the black name tag on the chest pocket. The tag could say Elder Ottley. Ha! That would be awesome!

I don't think I've ever had one of those missionaries come to my door. You guys don't seem to be doing your job from where I sit. If I end up going to hell because of you... I'm going to be totally pissed.

Now quit reading letters and get to sleep. You need to scale back on the letters page before you burnout. I need you to stay fresh. If you burnout, you might commit some heinous crime against humanity, like take a hiatus, and that simply won't do.

Brad Linford

PS Congrats on making Wizard's Top 10 writers. You deserve it. Also, Capes is righteous, keep doing the backup stories in Invincible, and bring back Brit.

More Brit is on the way. Did I say that?

A committee is a great idea! Rick's wife really looked concerned for her husband, oh wait, SHE'S A SKANK WITH ANOTHER MAN'S BABY! My bad! Have you ever given thought to Bendis guest writing an issue of Walking Dead? Or, at the least, pay back for listing your

phone number, have a Bendis zombie getting destroyed/killed? Anyway, thanks for the great book and happy holidays!

Bobby W. Chamberlain

I wouldn't let Bendis touch this book with YOUR dick. What do I want? A book that's just 22 pages of people sitting around TALKING? That'd be--oh... wait a minute.

Forget I said anything.

Mr. Kirkman,

Issue 24. Whoa. That was some good comics. You guys never disappoint. It seems to me that instead of losing it and going off the deep end as expected, Rick has really just opened his eyes and has finally come to terms with the way the world is now. It'll be interesting to see how Rick's new outlook (that things will never go back to normal again) collides with the hopes of rebuilding society that a lot of the characters are still holding on to. And the cover to issue 25? Nothing says let's fight back for society's status quo like a bunch of riot cops. There is some interesting stuff coming our way, I am sure of it.

As for flashbacks, I agree with you. If I wanted flashbacks all over the place, I'd go watch "Lost" or something. Come to think of it, that is what I do.

Lost is a great show.

Also, will we see Rick dealing with Patricia now? She is crazy, or "misguided" I guess, and she's already put everyone's safety in jeopardy, which seems like it should be a pretty big deal to Rick right now. And I hate her.

Isn't it good to have people around that you hate?

Ok, that's all, thanks for rocking my zombie world so much, as well as my super-hero world, and my marvel universe world. You are a king.

-Dan Means

Yeah... a BURGER king.

Kirkman and Company,

First of all, give my geekish existence a break and print this letter. I wrote a very thought-provoking missive about another issue and I think you printed in the neighborhood of 25,000 letters about it but not mine. It gave me a bad complex.

So most of the time I'm reading this letters thing "have I printed ALL these guys before? What the hell--it seems like I print EVERY letter." This issue must be for people who've written in but never gotten printed. Weird.

Secondly, kudos all around for a stellar twenty-fourth issue. I really like the turn you're taking by delving more into the sociological and psychological issues facing our heroes. I know it's been there since the beginning but it really seems to be coming to the forefront now. I kept thinking as I read the issue that it was like an adult Lord of the Flies. Have you read that book? And if so, has it provided any inspiration for the series?

I haven't even seen the movie.

To be honest, I hadn't really thought about the implications of how much ground you can cover with this thing. You can get into whether people are inherently good or evil, whether or not civilization is just a thin veneer to be easily stripped off when society breaks down. You can cover a lot of philosophical questions while, you know, zombies eat people.

Keep up the good work,
Crisman Strunk

I'll try to live up to your expectations.

Thanks for another great issue, Kirkman (and Dead team). I wouldn't be surprised if you get complaints that almost the whole issue was a speech from Rick, but I thought it was a great way to slow down the pace a little after the action last month. Looking at the next issue promo, it looks like we'll be getting right back into the action soon enough.

I also thought it was a great way to wrap up the first hardcover. The last three pages really provided a sense of finality, but leaves the future wide open. It's clear now that there is no hope of rescue, and it's time to create a new life in the zombie world.

Speaking of the hardcover, I love the idea, but I don't think I'm going to be able to afford the price tag... Granted, it's only about \$25 more than the individual issues at cover price, but I don't know about dropping \$100 at once... Maybe I'll find a way to swing it, but it's looking a little doubtful...

One complaint I had with issue 24... While I really liked the last three pages (I'd really like to buy that two page spread from Charlie, but again, there's the money issue), I didn't really care for the line "We are the walking dead." It makes for a great splash page, but it felt kind of corny to have Rick explain the title of the book to us. I know you've done the same in your letters pages, and that was fine, but actually seeing it spelled out that way in the context of the story seemed a little silly. I guess it's just a personal preference kind of thing... It's not like it's going to make me stop buying the book.

Hoaky? Maybe... but I liked the impact of it. I went back and forth over that scene for MONTHS and in the end, I like it. Keep in mind... the characters don't know it's the title of the book. Or that they're even in a book for that matter.

I'm really liking this committee idea that the group came up with (I'm surprised we didn't see how that decision was made. Having us pick up when Rick wakes up makes it seem like it's really HIS story, yet you say he could die at any time...). Anyway, I'm looking forward to the first disagreement in the committee. Rick says he likes the idea, but after having total control for so long, I can see him getting frustrated very quickly when things don't go his way. Another throw down with Tyreese is almost a given!

Now for my numbered questions:

1. In Letter Hacks, one of your readers (Jeff) mentioned that Tony won't be doing covers any more starting with 26. I haven't heard this anywhere else, so is this true? I hope not, because I do really like his covers. If he is leaving, does that mean Charlie gets bumped up to cover artist?

As you can see, this actually happened with 25. Tony got too busy working on Fear Agent (for Image) and Exterminators (for Vertigo) and didn't have time to do covers for TWD any more.

I think you'll agree Charlie and Cliff have more than filled his shoes.

2. Well, I only had one question, but I know how you love numbered questions...

Keep up the good work. I'll be eagerly awaiting the next issue. You're going to keep them coming every one or two weeks from now on, right? We're getting used to it, and you wouldn't want to disappoint us, would you? :-)

Jim Amato

As you can see, keeping up the every few weeks pace is pretty hard to do. Eventually--we'll just be monthly, consistently. It's hard keeping things on track but we'll do it. That's the goal.

Kirkman,

I haven't written in a while. Why did this issue result in my testicles getting bruised?

1) Carol kissing Rick: This additional wrinkle (possible love triangle developments?) adds yet another layer of complexity. I thought about why Carol would do this (Trust me, I didn't take that much time out of my valuable day. White man, please!): a) Tyreese's betrayal; b) Tyreese lied through omission in issue #23 regarding the fellatio scene; c) Rick defending Carol sets up this damsel-in-distress scenario; and, d) What other viable male companion/lover is there for her to choose?

2) Rick deposed as their unofficial leader: a) The reasons why the women wanted only men on the committee totally made sense. The world they live in is very primal and people adapt/revert to survival tactics. I believe the women consenting in this crucial area doesn't mean they are casting themselves as subordinates. I believe that they believe their strengths lie elsewhere; they know this because women really do rule, they just let men think they do. 3) Rick's speech from pages 16-21: He may no longer be in charge, but his honesty (eating crow: "You kill -- you die.") and ability to think outside the box ("We'll make new rules -- we'll still be humane and kind and we'll still care for each other.") still, in my mind, makes him the unofficial leader.

4) Rick says, "We are the walking dead!" Holy fuck, man. You blind-sided me with this. You flipped the scrip with that one. This statement absolutely CHANGES the perspective of the name, of the book, of everything.

Okay, you are genius.

On a serious note: I broke up with my girlfriend of 4 years about 6 months ago. Her favorite comic is The Walking Dead. We used to read aloud this comic together; it's a memory I'll always be fond of. Thank you for giving us something that we could share together.

Here's to happy holidays to you and your family.

Sophea Uk

Good to hear from you Sophea. Sorry to hear about the break-up.

Dear Walking Dead Crew,

All right, you beat me to it. Ever since I started reading your book (about six months now) I've suspected that the title didn't even refer to the zombies, and I was working up the nerve to actually write in and ask you guys about that, but then Issue 24 came out, and now my clever little insight looks so obvious and dated. Oh well!

I love how many of you write in... but don't seem to ever READ the letters columns. Bastards.

And what a lot of stuff has happened in the last few issues! We see relationships strengthen, and erode. We see Rick have a massive break-up with his new best friend and the shattering results. Alan dies, and frankly, considering he was pretty much looking for an excuse to give up for a while, I was surprised he made it as long as he did, poor guy. A mysterious lady shows up and screws everyone's relationships up! And now the group is looking to reorganize its hierarchy, such as it is. And the preview for the next issue...oh boy.

You guys must be insane to put out three comics in six weeks. It doesn't always take too long to write a script (depending on how much you need to edit and such) but I know that good art takes time. Man, did you have Charlie Adlard on stimulant the whole month or something? Great work, guys. Stellar.

It's actually more a case of Charlie drawing the book on a steady pace but all the other stuff that has to happen in order for the book to come out not happening on a steady pace. I'm trying to get things under control.

And now, because I don't think I have ever seen this question posed in any of your letter columns...what's your favorite Resident Evil game? Assuming you guys even play videogames, that is. I don't really have a favorite, myself. The first was almost intentionally awful but its remake rocked. The second, arguably the most popular, had interbranching story paths and a recurring, ever-mutating boss who was awesome, and cool environments. The third stole a lot of notes from The Terminator with its single, extra-powerful boss who simply would not stay dead and chased you through the whole game. The fourth...ah, the fourth doesn't even have ghoulish-type zombies, (instead, it has creepy mind-control zombies) but it brings the series back into the original's promise of "playing a horror movie" and has terrific gameplay, and hard-to-kill chainsaw maniacs with potato sacks over their heads. For completely different types of horror in games you guys might want to check out the Silent Hill series (Psychological! Isolation!) or Fatal Frame series (Scary, Ring-like ghosts you defeat with photography!), but that's neither here nor there.

I personally have only played the first one for any length of time. I have 2 and 4 but haven't gotten around to doing much with them.

Thank you all for a very great comic book. As far as that "Go to issue 250" dream you guys have...if you make it that far, I'll be with you all the way. Good luck!

Sincerely,
Steve Ball

250? Why stop there?!

Mr. K,

Well, you've gone and done it again. My friend and I have been arguing over something that started with the latest issue of The Walking Dead, and once again we've become deadlocked. Hopefully, you can settle the matter once and for all.

Here we go again.

We know what happens when a zombie bites a person, but what happens when a person bites a zombie? I figure, food has to be a major factor at some point, canned goods and the vegetable garden won't last forever. At some point, those things could start to look

a little tasty, especially with careful preparation and enough rosemary. OR, maybe there's some vaccination effect to be gained from eating zombie flesh. Being exposed to the active toxin while perfectly healthy might develop an immunity. I just want to know.

My friend thinks otherwise. She believes that no one in such an environment would ever become crazy or desperate enough to eat a zombie, even if the only alternative was a live family member. She also believes that biting a zombie would be the same as being bitten by one: zombification. I don't see it that way, especially in the Walking Dead world, where everyone is already exposed to the Z-factor, but I'm going to defer to the master on this.

If you could make the time to answer our question, I'd really appreciate it. Thanks.

Sincerely,
Ryan Walsh & Marsha Endre

I'm glad you asked this question. I don't think anyone would ever think a zombie would be "good eating" at ANY point... not matter what. And that's a GOOD thing because if a human bites a zombie a Leprechaun hops out of the zombie's ass and rapes you. That's NO FUN AT ALL.

Dear Kirkman,

Wow!!! The newest issues are amazing. The cover sorta set me off though with the whole Rick's eye thing, but the "We are the walking dead thing!" that they said was just spine tingling. This is the first set of comics I have ever read in my life so you opened my eyes to a new world. You are the best damn writer ever. (By the way I love invincible!!). I have a few questions but first more compliments. Your comics are the perfect blend of Sex, Gore, Horror, Action, Comedy, Mind Bending, and freaky situations. Not to mention I am a die hard zombie fan. Okay now the questions....

1.) Why don't you just make the goddamned movie already?!

Not up to me. I'm too busy with comics.

2.) Can I be an extra?!

I'm going to go ahead and say no. Sorry.

3.) Why are there not a lot of children zombies. Maybe one of the twins or someone can become one.

Little legs... they're always in the back of the horde.

4.) Why haven't the survivors just sat out on beach chairs and just blow out the zombies' friggin' brains already I mean what do they do for fun other than have sex?

That would waste bullets. They use far fewer bullets just lying around having sex.

5.) When will a new character come in or another one die.

I'm not giving anything away on the dying front... but we got a new character this very issue... a few actually.

6.) Have you had yourself put in as a zombie yet? I think you should.

I'm in this very issue. Look for me.

7.) You should go up to issue 500. Maybe 501. How high do you think you will go? I just love this series.

Right now I'm thinking issue 1000.

Those are just some of my questions. Just keep writing these amazing comics. I can't wait for the next.

Jason Rostovsky

Me neither.

P.S, This is my third time writing and I would appreciate it so much if it got in. please publish it.

I'll think about it.

Walking Dead is certainly one of the best horror based comics I have ever read.

1. In the Character bio pages at the back of the book. I have 3 suggestions. First one is to have the dead characters status written in bold caps. That would cause it to stand out more just how harsh this world of yours is. "Welcome to the Walking Dead world, Rick has a bullet with your name on it ready and waiting."

Second suggestion is more of a correction. Carl has a typo in his paragraph. The word heavy. And third, well Allen is dead now, right? Still says "alive" in his bio (you ask for more critical emails, right?)

Everything will be fixed... eventually.

2. I can't wait for the alien issue. Will there be an Elvis sighting? Would be kinda cool if the aliens had been subjugated by the King after they abducted him. Have all the aliens wearing dazzling white sequin suits and with massive fake porkchop sideburns.

I was just sitting around thinking of something that would make it clearer this book has "jumped the shark" than aliens showing up... you've done my job for me. Elvis it is.

3. I have really enjoyed the prison storyline. I know that many are clamoring for them to leave, but the potential for stories isn't dwindling because they are in the prison. Although the roster is dwindling a bit.

The prison works... you people will see.

4. I look forward to the Marvel Zombies book, but I have to say that so far I have preferred your work on Walking Dead over the stuff you have done at Marvel. I will still be buying Walking Dead after you jump the shark with issue 75. (Apparently I am one of the only readers of TWD that hasn't jumped on with Invincible yet. I'll have to look into correcting that.)

What are you waiting for? The Invincible: Ultimate Collection contains the first 13 issues along with over 80 pages of extras for \$34.95! And volume 2 is out in March! Hop to it. And try Marvel Team-Up--it's SWEET!

5. Often the issue comes up about a movie or an animated series. I think a cable tv series would be great. But it would have to be from one of the big channels. HBO or Showtime. I appreciate the Sci-Fi channel, but they couldn't do some aspects of the series and in all honesty, there is about an 85%

chance that a Sci-Fi show is gonna totally suck ass. Battlestar Galactica being the rarity. I would hate to see TWD done poorly, it deserves to be done in a spectacular fashion.

We'll see. There's no news to report on that front.

6. I for one don't anticipate this series ending. I hope to still be reading new issues when I am 90. That puts you close to 700 issues, but I am confident you can keep the series fresh at least that long.

Thanks,
JimmyZ

I just turned 27 recently... so I've got at least five or so good years left in me. We'll see. I think Charlie's in for the long-haul... but he's already like 75 so we'll see.

DUDE!

I'm writing with a complaint. Not because you said that the complaints were bound to get printed, mind you. I doubt you even get that many. Anyway, I'm not so sure that the "We are the Walking Dead" bit in #24 really worked. As a long time reader, I know why you had it in there, but I think it should have been left to the editorial or letters page; having a character say it came across as a bit too cute. Although I suppose we could put it down to an after effect of Rick's injuries.

Like I say, I see what you're talking about--but I liked it.

The rest of the issue was great though, and Charlie A's art was even better than usual for some reason. He gives the characters such expressive faces. Great work.

That's because Charlie is totally awesome.

-Kelvin Green

p.s. I also really enjoyed Marvel Zombies and the story you did for the Amazing Fantasy book. When are the guys at the M going to let you take over the Avengers? Hm?

That's Brian's book. I think he's doing a fine job with it.

Dear Mr. Kirkman,

I wanted to write a quick letter to say congratulations on the spectacular run of The Walking Dead to date.

Quick question. Where is the line between what your zombies do and don't want to eat? If they want living flesh, would they stop to eat a steaming BM that was recently expelled from a human body? I would think it would have plenty of organic matter in it and it would smell like the insides of a human, which they don't seem to mind chomping through when they pull a body's entrails apart. I guess the main question here is would one of your zombies stop in their tracks to eat some poo?

Mason

If I answer this letter will there be a bunch of people with a hidden camera popping out of my closet? Seriously. WHAT. THE. FUCK.

I hope you're parents died before they had to see this.

Robert,

I wasn't going to buy the Image Holiday Special 2005, then Comic Book Resources ran an article stating a Walking Dead short story is included. You know what? You are a jerk. I had to buy it now. I bought it. I read it. Thank you for shining a holiday spotlight on Duane and his father; a great emotional, heartfelt story. Yes, folks, another fine episode from the world of (key ominous sounding music)...the Walking Dead.

Okay -- you are NOT a jerk.

Good save.

With how the story is progressing, how soon is Rick and the group's path going to cross with Duane and Dad? A long way off?

Sopheia Uk

Who knows if it will ever happen? It's a big world.

Greetings and Salutations!

This is not the first time I've ever written a comic book. This isn't even the first time I've loved a book enough to write in and proclaim how much I love it. However, this is the first time that I have a feeling that my letter might get read. You see, I like a great many books on the market today. A lot of horror, a lot of superheroes, pretty much everything. Almost.

You see, when the first X-Men movie hit and Marvel changed their X-Books (Not everything I read, but a big slug of it) I felt betrayed. These were not the mutants I loved anymore, and they certainly didn't look like them. The movie was great in it's own way, but to bring the tacky leather to the comics... and all that damn chest hair.. I nearly cried. I almost stopped reading comics altogether. Some random DC books, G.I.Joe, and the now defunct Sojourn every month kept me (mostly) in the loop. I didn't really care all too much about a great story (Although G.I.Joe is a lifelong favorite and Sojourn was an amazing story which never received the end it deserved)

Then things started to change.

One fateful day, my brother in law (Who is also a comic fan, and a fan of yours now) and I were perusing the local shelves. While he was looking for back issues of some sort, I was content on grabbing some random books for reading in the think tank. I looked through the units, trying to find an appealing cover to sway my vote. Then I stumbled on to The Walking Dead #4. I looked at it and thought "The Walking Dead', eh? Let's see...". I picked up the book and skimmed through it. Black & white, nice. The artwork grabbed my eyes. Unfortunately, growing up with the rise of Image and their early standard of eye blistering unnecessary detail swayed me from many of their projects over the years. I didn't realize zombie horror (I am a zombie fanatic) could have these awesomely simplistic styles. I held on to that issue and looked at the back stock, seeing that there were some copies of 1-3 sitting there, going completely unnoticed. I quickly snatched these and said to my brother in law:

"Dude, this looks fuckin' awesome!"

That was the day that changed my comic reading life. I say reading because I collect on story. I have to enjoy the story or I just won't collect the book. It kind of bothers me when people just buy a book for a collection and don't read it. It seems like a waste of time and money.

When I first read those four books, I felt so insanely happy. Loving the zombie genre had never been this fulfilling. The Romero films are cinematic gems, and as far as anything in the genre goes, this book is on that same pedestal in my book. No other book or film has ever come close, and you guys just crashed that wall down. The story was so compelling. The characters were desperate and foolish, yet smart and snappy. Rick is a great lead character and his development so far has been so realistic and enthralling.

Soon I began a pull list at a friend's store which is now a mile long and I am a regular at all the local shops. I've recommended TWD to everyone I know, and with the exception of my 12 year old sister and my parents, they all love TWD and curse me for having all the back issues. Not only has TWD opened me back up to the vast comic world I had almost given up on, but creatively has influenced me to write more and give a much needed boost to my art.

So I thank everyone who has ever contributed to TWD. The book remains amazing and is nearly the only mainstay of my pull list (G.I.Joe and a few others have been there since the start as well). And yes, I have to be an asshole and have a few questions:

1) Mr. Kirkman, what are your top 5 albums? To write to or otherwise.

Uh, top five off the top of my head? Neil Young's Harvest, David Bowie's Let's Dance, Nick Cave's Let Love In, The Presidents Of The United States Of America's first album. But like I say, that's just off the top of my head.

2) Mr. Adlard, same question. Only for you it's "to draw to or otherwise".

Y'know, I really shouldn't do these at the last minute... then I could actually contact Charlie for stuff like this. The thing is... Charlie doesn't read these letters columns I'm sure. Let's see. Charlie--your mom's a wanker. That should get his attention. More news as it develops.

3) Will we ever see any more of Morgan and Duane Jones from the first issue? Unless I missed something, it seems like they could pop up at any moment...

Maybe one of these days. They were in the Image Christmas Special.

If I'm being a broken record kill me, but I keep reading about posters, toys and t-shirts. That would be one of the ten best ideas ever. Right after hygienic products and just before contraceptives. I know I would buy a shit load of toys of these guys.

So there's my two cents and the story of how I fell in love with your book.

Until Issue # 127 where Rick has a laser guided sword (Have you seen "Versus"? It's great!),

Your loyal fan-
Gareth Darko

My friend has been trying to get me to watch Versus for years... I've borrowed it from him at least three times and I never find time to watch it. One of these days though...

And now we've come to the new regular feature

of me trying to get you to buy all my other books. READ ON!

ITEM! Shipping the end of MARCH we'll have INVINCIBLE The Ultimate Collection VOLUME 2. It'll be a nice thick hardcover like the first one. It has issues 14-24 along with #0 and the Free Comic Book Day story and loads of extras. It'll retail for \$34.95

ITEM! SUPERPATRIOT: WAR ON TERROR #4 is finally coming out. Sorry for the long delay. It's been resolicited for MARCH and should be in stores toward the end of the month. It's our big finale... it's going to blow doors off--which considering how much time we spent putting the doors ON... should mean something to you.

ITEM! INVINCIBLE keeps going strong, if you like superheroes or people talking, fighting or crazy things happening to people who fight you'll dig it. Pick it up. Issue 30 should be out around the same time--or on the same DAY as this issue.

ITEM! BATTLE POPE is coming out regularly after a small snag with a worthless colorist. Issue 6 is on stands now and future issues should be following at a monthly rate, or the fur will fly. It's a fun series, written by me, drawn by Tony Moore & Friends and colors by aforementioned worthless colorist Val Staples. Ask for it by name.

ITEM! MARVEL TEAM-UP #19 is a kick ass story set in the Marvel Universe from 1991 featuring CABLE and WOLVERINE teaming up to fight THE MANDARIN. It features art by CORY WALKER and CLIFF RATHBURN and is going to be colored by VAL STAPLES. Ask for it by name. It's also a prelude to the big "FREEDOM RING" storyline that runs through Team-Up 20-24 featuring art by ANDY KUHN so pick it up.

ITEM! My second issue of ULTIMATE X-MEN should be out by now. Featuring art by TOM RANEY & BEN OLIVER. It's a blast working on these characters and I'm hoping the fun I'm having shows. I've got a lot of cool stuff planned for my run, so check it out.

ITEM! Unless you've been living under a rock you've heard about MARVEL ZOMBIES my mini-series with SEAN PHILIPS over at Marvel. The first issue just got a third printing and issue 4 should be on the shelves when this hits so be on the lookout--it's CRAZY FUN.

ITEM! Almost every WEDNESDAY you can swing over to COMIC BOOK RESOURCES (www.cbr.cc) and read my BUY MY BOOKS column. It features jpegs and all kinds of inside info on my upcoming books--that you should buy!

See you cats here again next month right? You better believe it!

-Robert Kirkman

NEXT ISSUE

THINGS
GET
WORSE.



Cliff '05

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